

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES  
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner  
Jeff Regnart, Director*



---

**Contact:**

Eric Newland, Summer Management Biologist  
Jeff Estensen, Fall Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 949-1320  
Fax: (907) 949-1830

Lower Yukon Area Office  
P.O. Box 127  
Emmonak, Alaska 99581  
Date Issued: 7/22/13  
Time: 8:30 p.m.

**2013 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 76  
Summer Update # 7, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery  
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

**Assessment Projects**

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing/ YDFDA, ADF&G

The project began July 16 at Emmonak. The cumulative CPUE for the project through July 21 was 142, which is above the historical average of 90 for that date.

Andreafsky River Weir/ USFWS

As of July 21, approximately 1,900 Chinook salmon have been recorded, which is well below the historical average of 3,500 for this date. The cumulative count of summer chum salmon through July 21 is 58,000, which is above the historical median of 42,000 for this date.

Pilot Station Sonar Project/ ADF&G

The Pilot Station sonar began counting fall chum salmon on July 19. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through July 21 is 28,300 fish, which is below the average passage of 42,500 fish for that date.

Anvik River Sonar Project/ ADF&G

The summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be approximately 552,900 through July 21, which is above the historical median of 436,500 for this date.

Gisasa River Weir/ USFWS

As of July 21, approximately 975 Chinook salmon have been recorded, which is well below the historical average of 1,900 for this date. The cumulative count of summer chum salmon through July 21 is 74,000, which is well above the historical median of 32,000 for this date.

#### Henshaw Creek Weir/ TCC

As of July 21, approximately 440 Chinook salmon have been recorded, which is well below the historical average of 850 for this date. The cumulative count of summer chum salmon through July 21 is 165,000, which is well above the historical median of 57,000 for this date.

#### Rapids Video Test Fish Wheel/ Zuray

Approximately 2,600 Chinook salmon have been recorded as of July 21, which is well above the historical average of 1,400 for this date. Approximately 1,900 summer chum salmon have been recorded, which is above the historical median of 820 for this date.

#### Chena River Tower/ ADF&G

As of July 21, approximately 800 Chinook salmon have been recorded, which is well below the historical average of 4,600 for this date. The cumulative count of summer chum salmon through July 21 is 1,800, which is well above the historical median of 700 for this date.

#### Salcha River Tower/ BSFA

As of July 21, approximately 2,300 Chinook salmon have been recorded, which is well below the historical average of 7,100 for this date. The cumulative count of summer chum salmon through July 21 is 2,900, which is well above the historical median of 1,200 for this date.

#### Eagle Sonar/ ADF&G

As of July 21, approximately 8,500 Chinook salmon have been counted which is below the historic cumulative average of 19,000 salmon for this date.

*NOTE: Other assessment projects will be added as they become operational.*

### **Summer Season Assessment**

Based on the assessment information to date, the Chinook salmon run is poor. Cumulative passage at the sonar located near Pilot Station is approximately 114,000 Chinook salmon, which is below the historical average of 144,000 for this date, and is also below the average passage estimate of 126,000 at this point for late run years. The first quarter point for the Chinook salmon run at the sonar was likely between June 21 and June 23, the median was likely between June 26 and June 27, and the third quarter point was approximately July 2. These dates are preliminary until the Chinook salmon run is completed. The first Chinook salmon was recorded at Eagle sonar near the Canadian border on July 6 and approximately 8,500 fish have been counted as of July 21. This is well below the historical cumulative average of 19,000 for this date. The second pulse of Chinook salmon should reach Eagle sonar later this week. Based on current data, the 2013 Chinook salmon total run size is projected to end near the middle of the preseason outlook range of 98,000 to 142,000 salmon.

Currently, all escapement monitoring projects for Chinook salmon (E. F. Andreafsky River weir, Gisasa River weir, Henshaw Creek weir, Chena River tower, and Salcha River tower) have estimated passages well below the historical averages for this date. Currently, no escapement goals have been met, but it is still early for the escapement projects because of late run timing.

However, due to the overall low run size, escapements are expected to be lower than historical averages in some or most monitored streams.

Summer chum salmon passage through July 18 at the sonar located near Pilot Station is estimated at approximately 2.7 million fish, which is well above the historical median of 1.8 million for this date. Chum salmon genetic samples processed from June 13 through July 11 from samples collected at the sonar test fishery indicate that stocks represent approximately 81% lower summer stocks, 18% middle summer stocks with less than 1% fall stocks.

The 2013 first quarter point for the summer chum salmon run at the sonar was June 22, the median was approximately June 27, and the third quarter point was approximately July 3. The escapement goal of at least 40,000 summer chum salmon at E.F. Andreafsky River was achieved on July 10 and had an estimated passage of approximately 58,000 salmon through July 21. The Anvik River goal of 350,000 – 700,000 summer chum salmon was achieved on July 9 and had an estimated passage of approximately 541,000 salmon through July 21. The 2013 summer chum salmon run exceeded the preseason outlook estimate of 1.5 – 1.8 million.

### **Age Composition Summer Season**

The Chinook salmon age composition from the 8.5-inch LYTF set nets through the season was 2% age-4, 21% age-5, 75% age-6, and 2% age-7 fish. Age-5 fish were below average and age-6 fish were above average. Females were above average at 62%. The sample size was 560 fish.

The summer chum salmon age composition from the 5.5-inch LYTF drift nets through the season was 45% age-4, 53% age-5, and 2% age-6 fish. Age-4 fish were near average and age-5 fish were slightly above average. Females were 50%. The sample size was 1,180 fish.

The summer chum salmon age composition from the commercial gillnet fishery after July 1 was 52% age-4, 46% age-5, and 2% age-6 fish. Females were 44%. The sample size was 800 fish collected from five periods in District 1.

### **Summer Season Management**

The 2013 Chinook salmon run is nearing completion. Subsistence fishing restrictions and schedules have been relaxed in District 1 through Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C as the majority of the Chinook salmon run has passed through these districts. Management actions continue to be focused on Subdistrict 5-D to ensure adequate Chinook salmon escapement is achieved. The first pulse of Chinook salmon began passing the Eagle sonar site beginning July 19. There is still some uncertainty associated with the strength of the second pulse of Chinook salmon which is expected to pass the Eagle sonar site beginning later this week. All of Subdistrict 5-D has been closed to protect passage of the first and second pulses of Chinook salmon. A short 24-hour subsistence fishing period is being allowed between the second and third pulse with gillnets restricted to no larger than 6-inch mesh size and fish wheels must release Chinook salmon alive. The duration of additional closures in Subdistrict 5-D will be determined based on run assessment information from Eagle sonar.

## **Summer Season Commercial Fishing**

The summer season commercial fishing season has ended in Districts 1 and 2. The preliminary commercial harvest in Districts 1 and 2 combined through July 17 is approximately 378,000 summer chum salmon with a reported 958 Chinook salmon released and 328 Chinook salmon caught but not sold. This is the highest commercial summer chum salmon harvest in the Lower Yukon since 1989.

**Subdistrict 4-A Commercial:** Commercial fishing will be open for six 24-hour fishing periods: Chinook salmon can be released alive or retained for subsistence purposes. The sale of Chinook salmon is prohibited and Chinook salmon caught but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.

Period #22: Monday, July 22

Period #23: Tuesday, July 23

Period #24: Wednesday, July 24

Period #25: Thursday, July 25

Period #26: Friday, July 26

Period #27: Saturday, July 27

The preliminary commercial harvest in Subdistrict 4-A through July 20 is approximately 84,000 summer chum salmon with a reported 99 Chinook salmon released alive.

**Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B Commercial Fish Wheel:** Commercial fishing will be open for two 42-hour fishing periods: Fish wheels must be manned at all times during operations and all Chinook salmon caught in the fish wheels must immediately be released to the water alive.

Period #2 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 22, until 12:00 noon Wednesday, July 24

Period #3 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 26, until 12:00 noon Sunday, July 28

The preliminary commercial harvest in Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B through July 21 is approximately 300 summer chum salmon with a reported 20 Chinook salmon released alive.

## **Fall Season Assessment**

The preseason fall chum salmon run projection, based on a historical relationship between summer chum and fall chum salmon runs, is greater than 900,000 fish. This level of abundance should be adequate to meet escapement and subsistence priorities, personal use, and provide a commercial harvest. Fall chum salmon typically enter the Yukon River in erratic fluctuations with large pulses of fish occurring over several days often followed by several days of lower passage. As a result, inseason abundance projections for fall chum salmon are highly variable until approximately the first quarter to midpoint of the run past Pilot Station sonar project, which, on average, occurs July 31 and August 8.

The coho salmon run is expected to be average in run size. Run reconstruction for coho salmon would suggest that an average run size is 200,000 fish. No coho salmon have been caught in any of the test fish projects which is normal for this time of year. A few coho salmon have been observed in the commercial fishery. The first quarter and midpoint of the coho salmon run past Pilot Station sonar project on average occurs on August 15 and August 20.

The Lower Yukon River districts switched to fall season management on July 16. The Lower Yukon Test Fisheries began fall operations on July 16. The Pilot Station sonar has been counting fall chum salmon passage since July 19. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through July 21 is approximately 28,300 fish, which is below the average passage of 42,400 fish for that date. Typically during the transition period between the summer and fall seasons (July 16 through the third week of July) there is a mixture of summer chum and fall chum salmon entering Yukon River. It does not appear that the first pulse of fall chum salmon has entered the river. However, chum salmon entry has been steady with good daily passages observed at Pilot Station sonar.

### **Age Composition Fall Season**

The fall chum salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through July 21 was 0% age-3, 50% age-4, 47% age-5, and 3% age-6 fish. The average age-4 fish is 57% and average age-5 fish 41% for this date. The sample size was 116 fish for ages and 140 for gender. Females contributed 53% to the samples, which is above the average of 50%.

The fall chum salmon age composition from the gillnet commercial fishery in District 1 was 53% age-4, 45% age-5, and 1% age-6 fish. The sample size was 77 fish for ages and 80 for gender. The proportion of females in the commercial catch samples was 45%. Samples from both the test fishery and the commercial harvest indicate a higher proportion of age-5 fish which may be expected based on the high proportions of age-4 fish observed last season.

### **Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing**

Two commercial fishing periods have been announced in District 1, and one period in District 2. District 1 commercial fishermen can expect to fish on a Monday and Thursday schedule, while District 2 fishermen can expect to fish on a Wednesday and Sunday schedule. When possible, the department may adjust the timing of the commercial periods as pulses of fall chum salmon are moving through each district. However, additional commercial fishing periods will be dependent upon inseason run strength assessment.

#### Preliminary harvest information for District 1:

Period #1: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 12 hours (9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. July 18), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (12:00 noon until 9:00 p.m. July 18).  
3,824 fall chum/25,309 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 0 coho/0 lbs.

Period #2: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 9 hours (3:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight July 22), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (6:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight July 22).  
No data available is available at this time.

Preliminary harvest information for District 2:

Period #1: District Y-2, 6 hours (2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. July 21),  
6,414 fall chum/42,825 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 0 coho/0 lbs.

**Subsistence Fishing Schedule:**

For the current subsistence schedule please call (toll free): **1-866-479-7387** or in Fairbanks call **(907) 459-7387**. The current subsistence fishing schedules are as follows:

**Coastal District:** Subsistence salmon fishing in the entire Coastal District is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**District 1:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 1 is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial salmon fishing period and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

In District 1 subsistence salmon fishing closed at 3:00 a.m. Monday, July 22, and will reopen at 12:00 noon Tuesday, July 23.

**District 2:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 2 is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial salmon fishing period and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**District 3:** Subsistence salmon fishing in District 3 is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**Subdistrict 4-A** (from  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik and Grayling Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistrict 4-A is open for two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays, and from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. Fridays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less and Chinook salmon may be kept when caught in fish wheels.

**Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C** (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C is open for two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Sundays until 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays, and from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. Fridays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less and Chinook salmon may be kept when caught in fish wheels.

**Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B and 5-C:** (from Illinois Creek upstream to regulatory markers 2 miles downstream of Waldron Creek): This area includes the communities of Tanana and Rampart as well as the area near the Yukon River Bridge.

Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C is currently closed. Effective, 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C will return to the regular subsistence salmon fishing schedule which consists of two 48-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Thursdays, and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less and Chinook salmon may be kept when caught in fish wheels.

**Subdistricts 5-D:** Because of the large size of Subdistrict 5-D and the long time it takes salmon to migrate all the way through this section of river, this management area will be further subdivided. This strategy is intended to allow for more management precision and flexibility when the reduced subsistence fishing schedule is implemented to conserve Chinook salmon. Subdistrict 5-D, will be divided into the following three areas:

**Subdistricts 5-D Lower** (from an ADF&G regulatory marker 2 miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Stevens Village and Beaver):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. Subsistence salmon fishing will be open for one 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period from 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, until 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 24. Gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size and fish wheels must be equipped with a chute or a live box. Fish wheels must be closely attended while in operation and all Chinook salmon caught in fish wheels must be returned to the water alive.

**Subdistrict 5-D Middle** (from the Hadweenzic River upstream to 22 Mile Slough and including the Porcupine River and all other adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Venetie, Fort Yukon, and Chalkyitsik):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. The department will notify fishermen by July 25 concerning the upcoming subsistence salmon fishing schedule.

**Subdistrict 5-D Upper** (from 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. Subsistence salmon fishing will be open for one 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period from 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, until 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 24. Gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size and fish wheels must be equipped with a chute or a live box. Fish wheels must be closely attended while in operation and all Chinook salmon caught in fish wheels must be returned to the water alive.

**Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B** (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B is currently open. Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B consists of two 42-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays, and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

**Subdistricts 6-C** (from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal use salmon fishing in Subdistrict 6-C is closed and will remain closed until further notice to conserve Chinook salmon.

**Old Minto Area:** Subsistence salmon fishing in Old Minto area is currently open and is on a schedule of 5 days a week, from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays, and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

**Innoko River:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

**Koyukuk River:** Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 26, fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less in the Koyukuk River.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures throughout the drainage, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at 1-866-479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call (907) 459-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADFG office in Emmonak at 949-1320 or in Fairbanks at 459-7274. The Emmonak ADFG office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.